

CHILDREN'S, PARENTS, AND TEACHERS'
REACTIONS TO TELEVISION

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A THESIS
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Rationale.— For a long time parents and teachers have been concerned with using children's strong interest in comic books effectively, or with redirecting it. Today a more common and frequent question among adult groups is, "What shall we do with television?" The complaints of parents point out that their children are irritable as a result of over-stimulating televiewing experiences which lead to sleepless nights and fatigued eyes. It was reported that a New Jersey teacher gave up her position because she felt that she could no longer compete with TV for the interest of boys and girls. She also had no desire to teach children who were irritable and restless because of excessive hours devoted to TV. On the other hand, some parents and teachers cite desirable results. Many parents believe that television serves as a common interest by bringing about greater harmony in family relationships. Some teachers have been very pleased with contributions children are able to make in class activities from their television experiences.

Whether the criticism of television is good, bad, or indifferent, two facts cannot be overemphasized. First, no other instrument offers as superior possibilities for communication as TV. Second, many children spend most of their free time with their eyes and ears focused upon television sets. The writer agrees with educators who say that teachers should not work against this powerful medium, instead they should work with it. Being a prospective teacher, she has conducted this study with a great amount of interest, wholeheartedly hoping that it would contribute

toward making an effective use of television in school curricula.

Statement of Problem.— This was a study of reactions to television, as indicated by 240 pupils enrolled in E. R. Carter Elementary School, 50 students enrolled in Turner High School, 75 parents, and 42 teachers, located in Atlanta, Georgia, for the purpose of offering suggestions and recommendations of how to make wider and more effective use of this medium of communication in school curricula.

Purpose of the Study.— The purpose of this study was to answer the following questions:

1. What is the average amount of time the selected children spend viewing television?
2. Do they spend less time listening to the radio than watching television?
3. Do they attend movies less than before they became televiewers?
4. Do the children feel that TV helps them with their school work?
5. Does television interfere with either their home or school work?
6. Have they been motivated by televiewing to read books?
7. Do children seem to be aware of any relationship between televiewing experiences and classroom activities?
8. What are their favorite programs?
9. What programs do they like least?
10. Have they learned to do anything by watching television?
11. Do certain shows frighten them?
12. Do they go to bed later than before they became televiewers?
13. Do they read comic books less?
14. Do they read books, magazines, and newspapers less?
15. Do the parents disapprove television in any way? In what ways

do they disapprove it?

16. Do the parents approve television? What reasons do they give for approving it?
17. What are the parents' favorite television shows? What shows do they approve for the children?
18. What programs do they disapprove for children? Why do they disapprove them?
19. Do parents think their children spend too much time watching television?
20. What are teachers' likes about television?
21. What are their dislikes?
22. Do the teachers approve children's choices of television shows?
23. Have the teachers recognized classroom problems which they think resulted from the children's televiewing habits?
24. Have the teachers made use of the children's television experiences, whenever it was possible, for arousing interest in class activities, or as a means for getting information for class activities?
25. Have the children contributed to class activities through television experiences?
26. Do the teachers think the children read less?
27. Do the teachers think the children get their assignments less?

Method of Research.— The normative-survey method of research, with the questionnaire and interview techniques for securing data, was employed in this study.

Scope and Limitations.— This study was concerned with how the selected children, parents, and teachers respond to television -- what they like and

don't like about it. An attempt was made to offer suggestions of how it might be utilized effectively in school curricula. No efforts were made to prove that television has affected the physical, emotional, or intellectual development of children. Because there are so many other factors which influence these developments, it is wholly impossible to draw such conclusions from this data.

It is important to recognize two major limitations of this study. First, only 240 pupils were used in securing responses from the elementary level. Second, it is highly probable that the instruments used for gathering data were not as valid as the writer desired.

Subject and Materials.— The following subjects and materials were used in conducting this study:

1. Two hundred and forty pupils who were enrolled at E. R. Carter Elementary School, Atlanta, Georgia, during the school year, 1952-53, whose grade levels ranged from kindergarten to seventh.
2. Fifty pupils who were enrolled in Turner High School, Atlanta, Georgia, during the same term, whose grade levels ranged from eighth to twelfth.
3. Forty-two teachers of the selected pupils.
4. Seventy-five parents.
5. Questionnaires constructed as data-gathering devices.

Method of Procedure.— This study proceeded in the following manner.

1. A survey was made of the literature related to this study.
2. The writer constructed three different forms of a questionnaire for parents, teachers, and children. This instrument inquired into the subjects' opinions of television.
3. After the questionnaires had been approved by the writer's advisor,

enough copies were mimeographed to supply the number of subjects used.

4. The writer administered the questionnaires to all students in grades three through twelve. Oral questions were used in kindergarten and the first two grades. It required approximately forty-five minutes to answer the children's questionnaires, and approximately thirty minutes for the parents' and teachers' forms. The teachers answered their questionnaires, at home and returned them on the following day. The parents' questionnaires were sent to their homes and returned by their children. All of the questionnaires were administered and collected during the week of May 18-22, 1953.

5. The responses on the questionnaires were analyzed and interpreted in order to answer the questions listed under the Purpose of the Study.

(a) Certain averages were computed concerning the amount of time consumed by television and other sources of entertainment.

(b) The data were examined for common opinions with regards to television.

6. Conclusions were drawn based on the evidence of findings revealed by the various responses.

7. Suggestions and recommendations were made.

8. The entire study was presented in tabular and textual forms.

A Survey of Related Literature.— The findings of related literature reviewed in this study can be categorized as follows:

1. Findings concerning the possibilities of television as an

educational medium.

2. Studies of the nature and amount of televiewing by children.

An article written by McGrath vividly expressed many educators' opinion regarding the possibilities of television as an educational medium. McGrath stated that:

"Education continues to rely primarily on the use of language. The more important processes of analysis, synthesis, invention and projection operate chiefly with the use verbal symbols. But everything which sharpens the meaning of the spoken or written word greatly facilitates the learning process.....From this perspective, I make one comment on the comparative importance of sound broadcasting and of television for educational purposes. The principal limitation of radio for education purposes lies precisely in the fact that it is limited solely to sound. As an amplification, enrichment, or expansion of the instructor's effort, radio's spoken word is excellent. With the round-table discussion or effectively dramatized presentation, radio adds new effectiveness to verbal instruction. It brings variety and new dimensions of importance to the student's experience. I would in no way minimize the importance of radio as an educational device, and I would demur strongly if it were suggested that the educational potential of sound broadcasting is unimportant. At the same time, this serves only to emphasize the much greater potential importance of television broadcasting for educational purposes. Where radio uses only the ears, television uses both ears and eyes. Television's potential advantage over radio appears to be as great as sound-on-film over the silent motion picture."¹

In addition to recognizing the remarkable advantages of television as a medium of communication, educators have become increasingly aware of its tremendous appeal to children's interest. This awareness has lead to several studies concerning the amount of televiewing by children and youth. For example, an investigation of the TV habits of more than 1,800 pupils was made by Rosenberg and DeNicola.

The responses of these pupils on questionnaires inquiring into their

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Earl J. McGrath, "Safeguarding Television Channels for Education," School Life, 33: pp. 51, 58-60, January, 1951.

TV habits showed that:

1. The average number of hours spent by pupils viewing TV was 3.54 hours per day per pupil.
2. The much discussed novelty factor does not exist.
3. There is a very definite correlation between the ages of children and the time spent viewing TV each week. The older the child, the less viewing he does.
4. Also there is a less conspicuous, but noticeable, correlation between sex and the length of time spent viewing TV.
 - a. Boys (ages 9-12) spend 27.04 hours per week.
 - b. Boys (ages 13-18) spend 16.74 hours per week.
 - c. Girls (ages 9-12) spend 21.45 hours per week.
 - d. Girls (ages 13-18) spend 20.10 hours per week.
5. It is also evident that television claims as much of the student's time weekly as he spends in school.
6. From the list of program preferences there are indicated definite differences in program preferences between sexes.

Preferences in Programs

Boys 9-12	Girls 9-12
1. Cowboy	1. Dramatic
2. Children's programs	2. Variety
3. Dramatic	3. Children's programs
4. Comedy	4. Cowboy
5. Variety	5. Comedy
6. Quiz	6. Quiz
7. News	7. Movie

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 8. Movie | 8. Music |
| 9. Music | 9. Religious |
| 10. Religious | 10. News |
| 11. Sports | 11. Sports |

7. Data showed that poorer television habits and lower intelligence quotients, lower parental control and poorer school achievement tend to be found in the same child.¹

Robert Shayon made a study of the amount of time children of different age levels spend viewing TV. The findings of this study indicate that children between the ages of five and six viewed television more frequently than any other age group. Their daily average was as much as four hours. The children in this age group did almost no homework. The amount of time spend viewing TV tends to diminish starting from the age of seven. This diminishing was obviously accounted for, because the children began to devote some attention to their homework which is steadily increasing at this time, and also because as a child grows, he begins to develop interests of his own.²

Gessleman studied the reading achievement of TV and non-TV children. This study was quite different from the previously mentioned ones, as it attempted to find and describe any differences in reading achievement between two groups of children, TV and non-TV, while the others were concerned primarily with the TV habits of children as a whole. Yet, a few observations were gleaned that are very pertinent to the present

¹ William A. Rosenberg, "The TV Week," The Clearing House, XXVII (March, 1953), pp. 430-431.

² Paul Witty, "Television and the Educative Process," School and Society, 74: pp. 369-72, December 15, 1952.

discussion. Conclusions drawn from these observations may be listed in six categories:

1. All of the children investigated showed that they approve wholeheartedly TV, and in many instances said that watching television is a thrilling experience.
2. Many reported that they had learned to cook, sew, knit, and build bird houses by watching television.
3. A few of the children had experienced bad dreams as a result of certain TV shows that frightened them.
4. TV children listen to the radio and attend movies less than non-TV children.
5. Nearly all parents felt that in order to make young children's televiewing most useful and worthwhile to them, the children needed supervision, guidance, and help in the interpretation of television programs.
6. The parents agreed that many of the nightmares might be cured, if the young children are only allowed to see pleasant shows such as, gay films, puppet shows, and circuses.¹

In a study made by Witty, 2,135 elementary pupils, their parents, and their teachers answered a questionnaire pertaining to the amount and nature of televiewing made by these children. Witty found that forty per cent of the pupils questioned had TV sets in their homes. The average time spent viewing television by children in homes where television sets were owned was three hours daily, and in homes where there were no

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Daisy Gessleman, "Television and Reading," *The Elementary English*, 28 (November, 1951), pp. 385-91.

television sets a little more than an hour and a half. All pupils were spending less time listening to the radio than in viewing TV. Their responses indicated that three-fourths of the pupils preferred television to radio. When they were asked whether TV helped them with their lessons, 67 percent said it did not, while 37 percent believed that TV helped. The children's preferences among TV programs were "Hopalong Cassidy," and "Howdy Doody," "Lone Ranger," "Milton Berl," "Arthur Godfrey," and "Small Fry."

Fifty-five per cent of the 1,700 parents approved children's choices of programs, mainly on the basis of the entertainment and educational values. The 25 per cent of parents who disapproved children's choices often said that they were too violent and too sensational.

Some teachers had encountered classroom problems which they associated with TV. Forty-eight per cent were dissatisfied with television, and 25 per cent felt that television has some serious limitations, but acknowledged its promise as an educational medium. Among the limitations frequently mentioned are the low standard of the educational offering and the poor quality of entertainment. The teachers pointed out that the children's choices of programs were undesirable for the nervous child and generally disruptive to normal, wholesome growth.¹

The foregoing discussion of literature related to this study may be summarized as follows:

1. It is possible for television to be utilized as an effective instructional aid as it appeals to both eyes and ears.

¹Paul Witty, "Children's Interest in Comics, Radio, Motion picture and TV," Educational Administration and Supervision, 38: pp. 138-47, March, 1953.

2. Children's televiewing habits are characterized by excessive viewing and poor choices of programs.

Although the present study is similar to the previously mentioned ones, it can be distinguished by one unique quality. This study was concerned more than any of the others, with the uses teachers have made of children's televiewing experiences.

CHAPTER II

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Explanation of the Questionnaire.-- In order to secure data for this study the writer found it necessary to construct three different forms of a questionnaire. These forms included one for the children, parents, and teachers. They consisted of items designed to obtain from the subjects responses that which would be necessary in answering the questions listed under the Purpose of the Study. As a guide for constructing the items, the writer grouped the list of questions in six general areas. They were: (1) the amount of the children's time consumed by television and other sources of entertainment; (2) television's effect on children's reading habits; (3) television's effect on their school and home work; (4) the children's least-liked and most-liked programs; (5) parents' attitudes toward television; and (6) the teachers' attitudes toward TV. From these general areas, specific questions were composed and were used as items for the questionnaire. The outline below shows how specific questions were composed from the first four areas. The questions were used as items on the children's questionnaire.

1. The amount of the children's time consumed by television and other sources of entertainment.

- (a) Do you listen to the radio less than you watch television?
- (b) About how much time do you spend each day watching television?
- (c) About how often do you go to the movies now?
- (d) Do you read comic books less than before you started

watching television?

2. Television's effect on children's reading habits?

- (a) Do you read books, magazines and newspapers less than before you started watching television?
- (b) Have you ever decided to read a book because of something you saw on television?

3. Television's effect on children's school and home work.

- (a) Do you miss getting your lessons in order to watch television?*
- (b) Do you finish your duties at home before you watch television?
- (c) Do you try to finish your lessons so you can watch your favorite show?

4. The children's least-liked and most-liked programs?

- (a) What TV shows do you like best?
- (b) What TV shows do you like least?

The teachers and parents' questions were composed in a similar manner.

The three questionnaire forms were submitted to the writer's adviser for criticism and suggestions. Necessary revisions were made on the basis of the adviser's appraisal. Enough copies were mimeographed to supply the subjects used.

Administering the Questionnaires.— The writer administered questionnaires to 290 pupils enrolled in grades three through twelve. Oral questions and interviews were used in the kindergarten and the first

*
These questions were answered by circling "Sometimes," "Often," or "Never."

two grades. The frequencies of these pupils in each grade are shown in table 1.

TABLE 1
THE FREQUENCIES OF QUESTIONNAIRES
ADMINISTERED IN EACH GRADE

GRADES	NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES
Kindergarten	20
First Grade	23
Second Grade	30
Third Grade	31
Fourth Grade	35
Fifth Grade	42
Sixth Grade	26
Seventh Grade	33
Eighth - Twelfth Grades	50
Total	290

The following procedure was used in administering the questionnaires:

1. Preparation was made for answering the questionnaires. The pupils cleared their desks, sharpened pencils, and waited attentively for explanations.
2. A general explanation of the purpose and nature of the questionnaires was given.
3. Each pupil was given a questionnaire.
4. The writer read through the questionnaires with the pupils.

5. The pupils asked questions concerning items which were not clear to them.
6. The writer gave explanations of the items which were not understood.
7. The pupils were asked to begin answering the questionnaires. It was suggested that they finish within an hour.
8. The writer gave individual help to those who needed more explanations.
9. The questionnaires were answered and collected by the end of forty five minutes.

Where oral questions were used, the children were given explanations of what they were being asked to do, and also of the procedure to be used. The teacher's desk and an extra chair were placed in a corner of the room. Each pupil in turn was asked to come up and take the seat designated for the pupils. While the writer talked with one pupil, the others continued with their work. The writer recorded brief answers during the intervals of the various interviews. More detailed answers were recorded after the writer left the classroom. The information was recorded on separate questionnaires. Each interview required approximately 5 minutes. The whole project required approximately six hours.

The teachers were given explanations of their questionnaires. They answered them at home and returned them on the following day. The parents' questionnaires were sent to their homes and returned by their children. A letter of explanation accompanied the questionnaires.

Method of Presenting Data.— The responses made on the questionnaires by the subjects were used as data for this study. The data below have been grouped under seven headings:

(1) The number of TV sets in the children's homes; (2) the amount of children's time consumed by TV and other sources of entertainment; (3) television's effect on the children's reading habits; (4) television's effect on children's school work and homework; (5) the children's least-liked and best-liked programs; and (6) the parents' attitudes toward TV; and (7) the teachers' attitudes toward TV. The discussion of the data will proceed according to the headings listed above. Tables will be used to facilitate clarity in presenting and discussing certain findings.

The Number of TV Sets in the Children's Homes.--- Eighty-seven per cent of the children had television sets in their homes. Table 11 shows the percent of pupils' in each grade who reported TV sets in their homes. Nearly all children who did not have sets indicated that they visit other homes so they can watch TV.

The Amount of Time Consumed by TV and Other Sources of Entertainment.--- All pupils stated that they enjoy watching television. The average amount of time the children spent viewing television was $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours daily. The average amount of time is 4.07 hours for owners as compared with 2.18 hours for non-owners. In responding to this question concerning the hours they spend televiewing, many indicated that they view more heavily on the week-ends. The week-end viewing hours usually showed an increase of two hours over the time spent during the week. However, the averages in Table 3 are based on the usual amount of time the children spend watching TV. Some of the pupils stated that they spend as much as seven hours televiewing daily. They made such responses as "I watch TV until the channels go off," or "I watch TV about one-half of each day." Other children view as little as one hour daily. Table 3 presents averages for time spent in televiewing.

TABLE 2
PER CENTS OF CHILDREN HAVING
TV SETS IN THE HOME

GRADE	PER CENT
Kindergarten	95
First Grade	96
Second Grade	83
Third Grade	90
Fourth Grade	80
Fifth Grade	90
Sixth Grade	92
Seventh Grade	82
Eighth - Twelfth Grades	87
Average	87

Seventy-five percent of the children spend more time watching television than listening to the radio. Fifty-four per cent stated a decrease in movie attendance since television programs are available. Forty-seven per cent read comic books less than formerly. Eighty per cent go to bed later than before they started watching television.

Television's Effect on Children's School Work and Homework.— Thirty-six per cent of the pupils believed that TV helps them with their lessons. For example, one pupil responded: "I see many places on TV and that makes map drawing easier for me." Another stated: "I keep up with current events so I can recite in history." Others believe that TV helps them in other subject areas, such as science, homemaking, and

TABLE 3
AVERAGE TIME SPENT TELEVIEWING BY ALL
CHILDREN AND BY TV-OWNERS AND
NON-OWNERS

GRADE	HOURS DAILY OWNERS	HOURS DAILY NON-OWNERS	ALL CHILDREN
Kindergarten	4.45	3.00	4.38
First Grade	4.13	2.00	3.92
Second Grade	3.42	1.35	3.08
Third Grade	3.75	2.33	3.61
Fourth Grade	3.44	2.29	3.17
Fifth Grade	3.80	2.00	3.72
Sixth Grade	3.80	3.00	3.63
Seventh Grade	3.94	2.00	3.48
Eighth - Twelfth	2.95	1.60	2.60
Averages	4.07	2.18	3.50

the language arts. A girl cited that she had gotten all of her ideas about fixing new dishes from TV. She added: "I made an "A" in cooking."

On the other hand, 62 per cent believed that TV did not help them with their lessons. They indicated that televiewing interferes with both their school work and duties at home. In answering the question, "Do you miss getting your lessons in order to watch television?" 53 per cent circled "Sometimes," 38 per cent circled "Often," and 19 per cent circled "Never." In answering the question, "Do you try to finish your lessons in order to watch television?," 46 per cent circled "Sometimes;" 21 per cent circled "Often;" and 33 per cent circled "Never."

Most of the children stated that they have learned to do various things by watching television. The younger children were thrilled with trying to make toys like the ones of Mr. Toymaker. The boys seemed to have thought that they were more skillful in constructing whistles and

TABLE 4
CHILDREN'S PREFERENCES AMONG
TV PROGRAMS

NAMES OF SHOWS	PREFERENCES OF EACH GRADE									T O T A L S
	K I N D E R N	G I R L S T	S E C O N D	T H I R D	F O U R T H	F I F T H	S I X T H	S E V E N T H	E I G H T H	T W E L F T H
I Love Lucy	1	3	8	28	12	21	9	17	28	127
Dragnet	1	1	2	19	6	10	8	13	19	79
Roy Rogers	7	10	15	21	4	5	1	4	2	69
Red Buttons	1	1	1	19	2	19	4	10	10	67
Superman	1	5	7	1	8	17	3	7	7	56
My Little Margie	0	2	5	13	8	2	5	2	6	43
Amos and Andy	1	1	3	7	2	8	4	4	8	38
Howdy Doody	11	14	3	5	2	0	0	0	0	35
Armchair Playhouse	2	9	0	0	4	4	3	6	4	32
Sky Theatre	0	0	0	0	2	16	5	6	1	30

airplanes. Some have learned more about cooking, drawing, and painting.

The Children's Best-Liked and Least-Liked TV Shows.— The favorite television shows of the children, as listed in order of their preference,

were: "I Love Lucy," "Dragnet," "Roy Rogers," "Red Buttons," "Superman," "My Little Margie," "Amos and Andy," "Howdy Doody," "Armchair Playhouse," and "Sky Theatre." Table 4 shows the preferences of each grade.

As indicated in table 4, the children's choices of programs varied at certain grade levels. For example, "Howdy Doody" and "Roy Rogers" were popular among the kindergarten, first, and second grades. However, "Howdy Doody," received no preferences after the fifth grade, and "Roy Rogers" received only a small amount of preference after the third grade. "I Love Lucy" and "Dragnet" became popular at the third-grade level and remained as favorites throughout high school.

Popular among the shows not listed were "Lone Ranger," "The Late Show," "Woody Willow," "I Married Joan," "Cartoon Capers," and "The Web." "Woody Willow" was a favorite of the kindergarten and first grade. "The Late Show" and "The Web" were popular from the fifth through twelfth grades. "I Married Joan," "Lone Ranger," and "Cartoon Capers" were popular from the third through the sixth grades.

The children's least-liked programs was classified as news, sports, swingbillies, children's programs*, and quiz programs. The younger children gave evidence that they had been frightened by certain shows. During the interviews they often told of nightmares which resulted from shows viewed just before bedtime. A little girl told of dreaming about a lion which frightened her terribly. She had seen a jungle show. Other children had been frightened by shows where murder was involved.

Parents' Attitudes Toward Television.— Questionnaires were sent to

*

Examples of children programs: Rootie Kazootie, Howdy Doody, Woody Willow and the like.

105 parents who reported a return of 72 per cent or 75 copies. The responses obtained from the 75 parents showed that nearly all parents disapproved TV in some way. Their most frequent complaints may be listed under three categories which are overlapping to a certain extent. First, because there is usually one television set in a home, disagreements arise when program choices for all members are not the same. Second, children think they should watch television all times regardless of assignments, home chores, or bedtime. Third, mothers often leave their work unfinished in order to watch television.

The parents' most frequently expressed like about television was that it keeps the children at home. They also agreed that TV offers many experiences which are of educational value. "The family is able to see places in this country and other countries that it would probably never see if it were not for television. Television keeps you informed of important national and international affairs."

Sixty-seven per cent of the parents felt that children spend too much time watching television. In addition to this response, they often stated that it keeps the children from getting enough sleep, shortens the time for outdoor play, interferes with the home and school work, and causes them to spend less time reading.

Twenty-two per cent stated that their children did not spend too much time watching television because they are not allowed to. These parents have tried to develop some control over televising by setting special times and the number of hours to be spent watching TV. Eleven per cent felt that children do not spend too much time watching television. This response was usually followed with such statements as, "It keeps the children satisfied," "It's better than noisy outdoor play," and "It helps

me to keep up with the children."

The favorite television shows of the parents, in order of their preferences, were "I Love Lucy," "Dragnet,"* "Strike It Rich," "Arthur Godfrey," "Amos and Andy," and "Man Against Crime." The least-liked programs of the parents were: Swingbillies, Sports and Cowboys. The parents' choices of television shows for children were: "Cartoon Capers," "Super Circus," "Zoo Parade," "Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts," "Woody Willow," and "Howdy Doody."

Nearly all parents thought children should not see shows which involve a large amount of crime or love between the opposite sexes. Their main reasons for disapproving criminal stories were: first, children often imitate the heroes; second, the children might later develop criminal habits; and third, some children are frightened by violent shows and as a result develop nervous tensions. The parents felt that children are too young to see "Love stories." Because they are not mature enough to understand, they ask many questions the answers to which, as believed by the parents, are too advanced for their age level. Parents also believed that children can be influenced to take love-making too lightly if they are allowed to see so many of the shows. Some of the parents disapproved cowboys for children because they often try to pattern their mannerisms after those of the stars. Examples of specific shows which parents say are not good for children are "The Web," "Danger," "Suspense," and "Man Against Crime."

In a response to a question asking what TV shows children simultaneously

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"I Love Lucy and "Dragnet" received equal amount of preference.

mention most often, the parents listed "I Love Lucy," "Arthur Godfrey," "Dragnet," "Roy Rogers," and "Red Buttons."

Teachers' Attitudes Toward TV.— In addition to information obtained from children and parents 42 teachers answered a questionnaire inquiring into the televiewing habits of children. After a careful analysis of teachers' responses, it was revealed that fifty-five per cent of the teachers disapprove the TV shows viewed by children. Their main complaint about children's selections of programs was based on the opinion that they are selected mainly for entertainment without any regards to educational values. They also believed that some of the programs are too violent. Thirty per cent approved children's choices of programs mainly on the basis of entertainment values. Fifteen per cent expressed no opinions concerning children's choices of television shows.

It was the opinion of seventy-two per cent of the teachers that children spend too much time watching television. Sixteen per cent think children do not spend too much time watching TV. The other twelve per cent did not respond to that particular item.

Thirty-eight per cent have encountered behavior problems which they believed were caused or influenced by television. The problems were usually characterized by the children trying to display mannerisms similar to those of cowboys or by their becoming restless and unattentive. One teacher stated that children are too anxious to get home so they can see their favorite show.

Nearly all teachers expressed both likes and dislikes about television. However, their likes are more numerous than their dislikes. All of their dislikes were based on the opinions that the children's choices of programs are not desirable, they stay up too late, they need more outdoor play and

they need to read more. The teachers believe that these supervision shortcomings can be alleviated with proper guidance and supervision from parents and teachers. The teachers' most common likes about television fall under six categories: first, because television appeals to both the sense of hearing and that of seeing, it is possible for children to understand material presented on this medium which they might not understand if they either read or heard it; second it keeps you informed of local, state, and world affairs; third, the various experiences of travel offered by TV allow a person to see places and people that otherwise he would not probably be able to see; fourth, it motivates self expression by giving a person something interesting and worthwhile to share in informal and formal discussions; fifth, television helps to develop listening habits; and sixth, much correlation can be made between subject and information presented via television.

Forty-six per cent stated that their class activities had been made more meaningful by contributions children were able to make through their television experiences. The pupils readily participated in the discussions of current events, alertness was shown by the students in correlating television experiences with subject matter. For instance, two teachers in the lower grades noticed when the children saw certain animals on "Zoo Parade" they shared the experiences with the class during science discussions. Some children brought new games and songs that were seen and heard on TV to school so their class could learn them.

Thirty-five per cent indicated that opportunities were provided by the school for children to make use of knowledge gained through TV. One class made toys like the ones of "Mr. Toymaker." Panels, forums, and assembly programs were patterned by similar activity occurring on television

shows. A librarian cited an illustrative example of how a class helped her develop a quiz show for "Book Week" from the ideas of "What's My Line." Sixty-nine per cent of the teachers stated that they had not noticed any decrease in the amount of reading by children since the advent of television. Twenty-one per cent believed that children read less than formerly. Ten per cent had no opinions. Fifty-eight per cent believed that children get their home assignments as well as formerly. Thirty-seven per cent believed that children do not get their homework as well. The other five per cent expressed no opinions.

As indicated by the teachers, the children simultaneously mentioned most often the following TV shows: "Dragnet," "Superman," "I Love Lucy," "Arthur Godfrey," "My Little Margie," and many Western Shows.

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Statement of the Problem.— This was a study of reactions to television for the purpose of offering suggestions and recommendations of how to make wider and more effective uses of this medium of communication in school curricula. These reactions were indicated by a large number of children, parents, and teachers who were located in Atlanta, Georgia.

Purpose of the Study.— The purpose of this study was to answer the following questions:

1. What is the average amount of time the selected children spend viewing television?
2. Do they spend less time listening to the radio than watching television?
3. Do they attend movies less than before they became televiewers?
4. Do the children feel that TV helps them with their school work?
5. Does televiewing interfere with either their home or school work?
6. Have they been motivated by televiewing to read books?
7. Do the children seem to be aware of any relationship between televiewing experiences and classroom activities?
8. What are their favorite programs?
9. What programs do they like least?
10. Have they learned to do anything by watching television?
11. Do certain shows frighten them?
12. Do they go to bed later than before they became televiewers?
13. Do they read comic books less? Do they read books, magazines,

and newspapers less?

14. What are the parents' attitudes toward TV?

15. What are the teachers' attitudes toward TV?

Summary of Related Literature.-- A survey of related literature revealed that the amount of children's time consumed by television weekly equaled almost the amount of time they spent in school each week. There was a definite correlation between the ages of children and the time spent viewing TV each week. The older the child the less viewing he did.

All pupils spent less time listening to the radio than in viewing television. TV children attended movies less than non-TV children. The enthusiasm children had for television persisted even after the initial attraction had subsided.

Nearly all parents felt that children need supervision and guidance in order to make their television experiences useful. The favorite programs of both parents and children were mainly of entertainment value. Teachers frequently expressed dissatisfaction with children's choices of programs. They pointed out that children's choices were not of educational values.

Method of Research.-- The Normative-Survey Method of research, with the questionnaire and interview techniques for securing data, was employed in this study.

Summary of Findings.-- To secure the necessary data for this study, questionnaires were filled out by 240 elementary pupils who were enrolled in E. R. Carter Elementary School during the school term 1952-53, 50 high school students who were enrolled in Turner High School during the same term, 42 teachers, and 75 parents, all located in Atlanta, Georgia. The findings of the study as indicated by the subjects' responses showed

that televisions were available in 87 per cent of the children's homes.

The average amount of time that the children spent viewing television was $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours daily. The average amount of time spent viewing television was 4.07 hours daily for TV owners and 2.18 hours for non-owners.

The favorite television shows of the children, as listed in order of their preference, were: "I Love Lucy," "Dragnet," "Roy Rogers," "Red Buttons," "Superman," "My Little Margie," "Amos and Andy," "Howdy Doody," "Armchair Playhouse," and "Sky Theatre." The children's least-liked programs were classified as News, Sports, Swingbillies, Children's programs, and Quiz programs.

Most children reported that they attend movies less and listen to the radio less than before they became televiewers. Some reported that they read comic books, magazines, newspapers, and other books less. Nearly all children stated that they go to bed later than before they started watching television. Thirty-six per cent of the pupils believed that TV helped them with their lessons. Sixty-two per cent believed that TV did not help them with their lessons. Most of the children had learned to do something by watching television.

The parents' most frequently expressed like about television was that it keeps the children at home. They also agreed that TV offers many experiences which are of educational value. The parents' most frequently expressed dislike about television was that it consumes too much time. The favorite television shows of the parents, in order of their preferences were: "I Love Lucy," "Dragnet," "Strike It Rich," "Arthur Godfrey," and "Man Against Crime." Teachers expressed both likes and dislikes about television. All of their dislikes were based on the opinions that the

children's choices of programs are not desirable and they spend too much time televiewing. The teachers agreed that TV offers a wide range of experiences which are of educational values. Nearly all parents and teachers agreed that children need guidance and supervision in order that television experiences might be wholesome and worthwhile.

Conclusions.-- From the foregoing findings there seems to be evidence to conclude that television has a stronger appeal for the children's interests than any other leisure activity explored in this study. The amount of time the children spend watching TV is equal to approximately two-thirds the amount of time they spend in school. The programs of both children and parents are mainly of entertainment value. There is little, if any, high educational value to be gained from these programs.

The parents' and teachers' responses indicate that problems have arisen at home and in school as the result of the nature and amount of televiewing by children. Parents and teachers recognize the educational values of television. It is agreed among parents and teachers that children need guidance in order to form desirable televiewing habits.

Implications.-- Two broad implications of educational significance can be drawn from this study. First, television can be an asset to education. It can facilitate learning and development because of its appeal to children's interests, and its supreme qualities as an audio-visual aid. Second, television can be a liability if the children are allowed to indulge continuously in televiewing habits which are inferior in quality. Such indulgence might finally hamper physical, mental, and intellectual growth.

Suggestions and Recommendations.-- With these implications and conclusions in mind, the writer considered ways by which television might be

made more useful in school curricula. The considerations lead the writer to make the following suggestions and recommendations:

1. Discover what needs are satisfied by children's televiewing experiences and try to provide other activities which meet the same needs.
2. Use children's televiewing experiences to stimulate interest in classroom activities.
3. Keep children informed of TV programs which are related to their school work.
4. Encourage pupils to share their televiewing experiences whenever they add to the interest and understanding of information.
5. Provide guidance for helping pupils to develop a well-balanced recreational program.
6. Help pupils to develop standards of appraising television programs as well as reading materials.

Suggestions for Further Study.-- The writer suggests that further study be made of children's, parents', and teachers' reactions to television with a larger number of subjects than the present study used. The researcher might explore such areas as, the reading achievement of TV and non-TV children, the relationship of parental control and children's televiewing habits, the relationship of intelligence and nature of programs viewed by children, and the emotional adjustment of TV and non-TV children.

APPENDIX

A QUESTIONNAIRE
ON
CHILDREN'S REACTIONS TO TELEVISION

Name _____ Age _____ Date _____

These questions are to find out some of the things you like and do not like about television. Answer each question as carefully as you can.

1. Do you like to watch television? _____

2. Do you have a television set in your home? _____

If you do not have a television set in your home, do you go to your friend's house to watch television? _____

3. Do you listen to the radio less than you watch television? _____

4. About how much time do you spend each day watching television? _____

5. Do you think you go to the movies less than before you started watching television? _____

About how often do you go to the movies now? _____

About how often did you go to the movies before you started watching television? _____



6. About what time do you go to bed? _____

Do you go to bed later than before you started watching television? _____

About what time did you go to bed before you started watching television? _____

7. Do you read comic books less than before you started watching television? _____

8. Do you read books, magazines, and newspapers less than before you started watching television? _____
9. Have you learned to do something, like cook, sew, draw, paint, or any other thing that is of some use, by watching television? _____
- If so, what have you learned to do? _____
- _____
10. Have you seen anything on TV that helped you to understand your lessons/ _____
- If so, give an example. _____
- _____
11. Have you ever decided to read a book because of something you saw on television? _____
12. Do some shows frighten you? _____
- If so, what shows frighten you? _____
- _____
13. Do you dream about the television shows that frighten you? _____
14. What TV shows do you like best? (1) _____
- (2) _____ (3) _____
- (4) _____ (5) _____
- (6) _____
15. What TV shows do you like least? (1) _____
- (2) _____ (3) _____
- (4) _____ (5) _____
- (6) _____

Directions: Below are some questions that can be answered by circling,  , "Sometimes", "Often", or "Never". Think carefully about the questions, and then put a circle,  , around the word that you chose for an answer.

16. Do you miss getting your lessons in order to watch television?

Sometimes Often Never

17. Do you try to finish your lessons so you can watch your favorite show?

Sometimes Often Never

13. Do you finish your duties at home before you watch television?

Sometimes Often Never

5. What program or programs do you think children should not see?

6. Why do you think children should not see these programs? _____

7. Does your child seem to read less than before television programs were available? _____

8. What do you like about having a television set in your home?

9. What are your dislikes about having a television set in your home? _____

10. Do you think your child spends too much time watching television? _____

11. What program or programs do your child seem to talk about most? _____

A QUESTIONNAIRE
ON
TEACHERS' REACTIONS TO TELEVISION

Name _____ School _____
Grade you are teaching _____

These questions are to find out your present convictions about television and children. Please answer them as carefully as possible.

1. Do you approve the children's choices of programs? _____

If not, what are your reasons for disapproving them? _____

2. Have you encountered any behavior problems which you thought resulted from the type of TV programs the children see? no

If so, what are some examples of these problems? _____

3. Do you think the children spend too much time watching television? no

4. Do the children seem to read less than before TV programs were available? no

5. Do they seem to get their home assignments less? no

6. Have the children shown any signs of restlessness or inattentiveness that you believe resulted from their excessive television viewing? _____

7. Do the children contribute to class activities through their Television experiences? _____

If so, give one example. _____

8. Do you, in any way, disapprove television for children? _____

If so, in what way or ways do you disapprove it? _____

9. In what ways, if there are any, do you approve television for children? _____

10. Does your school or classroom program provide opportunities for the children to make use of their television experiences? _____

If so, give an example. _____

11. What TV programs do the children discuss or mention spontaneously more than any others? _____

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